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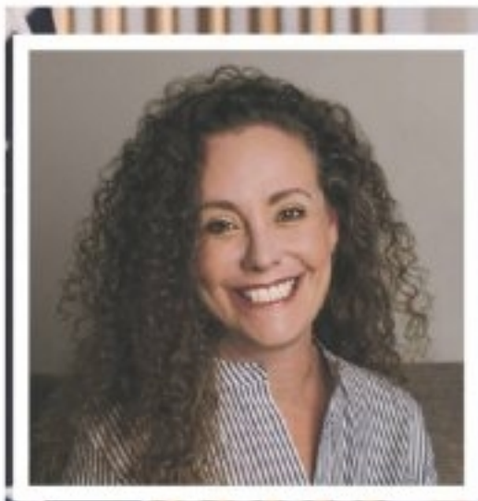

DON SOLO

President Trump called accusations against Kavanaugh a "con job" during his intense and wide-ranging press conference on the eve of Thursday's Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. 2, 6, 7, 8

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8 THINGS TO KNOW

Trump defends Kavanaugh against Dems' 'con job'

Trump held an hour-plus news conference Wednesday.

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President Donald Trump on Wednesday defended Brett Kavanaugh at an intense solo news conference but also hinted that he could withdraw his support for Brett Kavanaugh depending on the testimony in a high-profile Thursday hearing into multiple accusations of sexual misconduct against the Supreme Court nominee.

Trump defended Kavanaugh, now a federal appeals court judge, at a New York news conference, but the president's comments injected another note of uncertainty into Kavanaugh's already-troubled bid for a lifetime appointment to the nation's highest court.

"You know, believe it or not, I'm going to see what's said" at the hearing, Trump told reporters.

A third woman has accused Kavanaugh of aggressive sexual behavior in the 1980s. The nominee has vehemently denied all of the allegations ahead of the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing coming up on Thursday, where one of his accusers, Christine Blasey Ford, will also testify to senators.

Trump dismissed the allegations against Kavanaugh as a "big fat con job" orchestrated by Democrats. Speaking to reporters in New York, where he is attending the annual U.N. gathering of world leaders, Trump said of the new allegation, "I think it's ridiculous." On Twitter, Trump called Michael Avenatti, lawyer for the most recent accuser, Julie Swetnick, "a total low-life" and "a third rate lawyer who is good at making false accusations." Avenatti responded on Twitter, calling Trump "a habitual liar and complete narcissist."

He did not say that Kavanaugh's female accusers were lying.

"I can always be convinced," Trump said. "It will be interesting to hear what she has to say."

Trump himself has faced multiple accusations of sexual misconduct. He said this has shaped his view of the allegations against Kavanaugh.

"I've had a lot of false charges made against me," he said. "When I see it, I view it differently than someone sitting home watching television where they say, 'Oh, Judge Kavanaugh this and that.'"

Trump on Wednesday also blasted Canada over the slow pace of talks over NAFTA, saying he was so unhappy that he had rejected Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's request for a one-on-one meeting.

The remarks by Trump, who repeated a threat to impose tariffs on Canadian autos, knocked the Canadian dollar down to a one-week low against the U.S. greenback.

"I've had a lot of false charges made against me."
President Donald Trump

The comments also mark a new low in relations between the two leaders. Trudeau spokeswoman Chantal Gagnon said: "No meeting was requested. We don't have any comment beyond that."

The attack cast further doubt on the future of the three-nation North American Free Trade Agreement, which underpins $1.2 trillion in annual trade between Canada, Mexico and the United States. Markets and business groups are openly fretting about the damage that a collapse could provoke.

Trump, who wants major changes to the 1994 treaty, has already concluded a text with Mexico and is threatening to leave out Canada unless it signs up by this Sunday.

Trump told reporters he had rebuffed a Trudeau request for a meeting "because his tariffs are too high and he doesn't seem to want to move and I told him 'forget about it.' And frankly we're thinking about just taxing cars coming in from Canada."

Trump also said on Wednesday he did not have a time frame for North Korea to denuclearize, just as his secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, plans to visit Pyongyang again next month to set up a second summit for Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

"I think we're really going to do something that's going to be very important, but we're not playing the time game," Trump told reporters. "If it takes two years, three years or five months — doesn't matter." REUTERS

RBG VOICES SUPPORT FOR #METOO ON HEARING'S EVE

2 Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg voiced support for the #MeToo movement on Wednesday in a striking statement on the eve of a high-stakes U.S. Senate hearing into allegations of sexual misconduct by President Donald Trump's nominee to the court, Brett Kavanaugh. During a question-and-answer period that followed an address to first-year law students at Georgetown University in Washington, Ginsburg was asked if there was anything she was excited or disappointed about regarding the current women's movement. After discussing the problem of "unconscious bias" that leads to gender discrimination, she said she was "cheered on" by the #MeToo movement, a national reckoning with sexual assault and harassment that has brought down dozens of rich and powerful men. "Every woman of my vintage has not just one story but many stories, but we thought there was nothing you could do about it — boys will be boys — so just find a way to get out of it," said Ginsburg, 85. Ginsburg said that the #MeToo movement showed women coming together in numbers.

TRUMP SAYS HE PREFERS TO KEEP ROSENSTEIN

3 President Donald Trump said on Wednesday he would prefer to keep Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein in his job, after the New York Times reported Rosenstein had suggested secretly recording Trump and recruiting Cabinet members to remove the president from office. "I'm talking with him. We've had a good talk. He said he never said it. He said he doesn't believe. He said he has a lot of respect for me. And he was very nice. And we'll see," Trump said at a news conference, when asked if he would fire Rosenstein. "My preference would be to keep him and to let him finish up," Trump said, without explaining what he would like Rosenstein to finish working on. Rosenstein currently oversees Special Counsel Robert Mueller's independent investigation into possible Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election. Russia denies interfering. Rosenstein is often the target of Trump's anger. Some news media reported Monday that Rosenstein would soon leave his post, prompting Trump, in New York for the U.N. General Assembly, to say he would meet with the second-most powerful Justice Department official on Thursday.

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NEWS

Supporters of former 'Lost Boy' detained in South Sudan to rally at UN

Supporters of Peter Biar Ajak, the jailed South Sudanese economist and former "Lost Boy," have planned a march at the UN.

SAM NEWHOUSE
sam.newhouse@metro.us

Pleas for justice on behalf of a South Sudanese political prisoner, jailed for criticizing his homeland's leaders, will be made outside the United Nations General Assembly meeting on Friday. Supporters of Peter Biar Ajak, who was detained two months ago and is yet to be formally charged, are planning a rally in Manhattan to call for the release of their friend, as well as all South Sudanese political prisoners.

"It's really important for the UN General Assembly, world leaders, and people to hear this story, and to understand that South Sudan is in violation of their own constitution and human rights laws," said Nicole Wilson, a friend of Ajak's who is working to organize the march. "Peter has so many friends, he is cared about by so many people, he is an important mentor to so many people, so many youth have relied on him. We're not going to forget he's there, we're going to keep fighting until he's out."

"He will be charged, or if we find he has not committed any crime, he will be released."
Spokesman for South Sudan President Salva Kiir

Peter Biar Ajak, a former "Lost Boy" detained for two months in his native South Sudan without being charged, will be championed at a rally planned outside the U.N. on Friday. PROVIDED

Ajak was arrested on July 28 as he arrived at an airport near Juba, South Sudan. Two months later, he has not yet been charged. South Sudanese sources previously said Ajak was charged with treason, but at this point, the charges are just those being investigated.

"He will be charged, or if we find he has not committed any crime, he will be released," a spokesman for South Sudan President Salva Kiir told BBC Africa, saying Ajak's arrest by the country's National Security Services (NSS) was related to a "national security" concern.

But supporters say Ajak is a peaceful man who has been wrongly arrested for raising legitimate criticisms of his homeland's current leaders.

"It's been two months, and already it feels like he's been in for a year," said Aaron Spence, another friend of Ajak's who is organizing the rally. "Imagine how his family feels, how his 5-year-old son feels wondering what's up with daddy."

Ajak, who resides in Nairobi, Kenya with his wife and children, due to the instability in South Sudan, is an activist, academic, economic analyst and businessman. He previously founded South Sudan Wrestling Entertainment, a sport intended to foster national unity among rival tribes.

He has been publicly critical of the peace efforts in South Sudan, which was formed as a new nation in 2011 but soon after descended into a new civil war, and has advocated a so-called "generational exit" to induct young people into politics.

Current president Kiir signed a peace treaty with rebel leader Riek Machar ending the conflict within days of the arrest of Ajak, who had criticized both men and their treaty.

None of Biar's supporters think he is a threat to the security of South Sudan — they say he wants to participate peacefully in building the country's future.

"Peter is very passionate about peace in South Sudan," Wilson said. "We want to show the South Sudanese government that we're serious about the release of Peter and other political detainees. Their story is worth telling."

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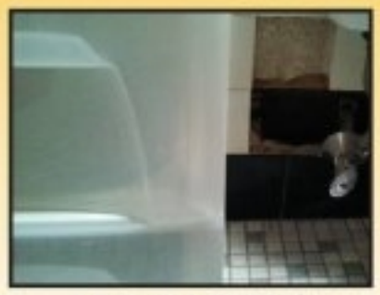
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Kavanaugh denies sexual-misconduct accusation by third woman

President Trump called Julie Swetnick's lawyer Michael Avenatti a "total lowlife" following the allegation.

A third woman on Wednesday accused Brett Kavanaugh, President Donald Trump's U.S. Supreme Court nominee, of sexual misconduct in the 1980s, further inflaming an already contentious Senate confirmation process. Kavanaugh immediately denied the allegation.

The woman, Julie Swetnick, detailed her allegation in a statement to the Senate Judiciary Committee a day before the Republican-led panel is set to hold a high-stakes hearing in which Kavanaugh and Christine Blasey Ford, who has accused him of a sexual assault in 1982, will testify.

"This is ridiculous and from the Twilight Zone," Kavanaugh said in a statement released by the White House. "I don't know who this is and this never happened."

Swetnick is represented by lawyer Michael Avenatti, who also represents adult-film star Stormy Daniels in a lawsuit against Trump to void a nondisclosure agreement under which the president's former personal lawyer paid her $130,000 not to discuss her alleged relationship with Trump more than a decade ago.

Speaking to reporters in New York, where he is attending the annual U.N. gathering of world leaders, Trump said of the new allegation, "I think it's ridiculous." On Twitter, Trump called Avenatti "a total low-life" and "a third rate lawyer who is good at making false accusations." Avenatti responded on Twitter, calling Trump "a habitual liar and complete narcissist."

In her statement, Swetnick said she attended more than 10 house parties in the Washington area from 1981 to 1983 where Kavanaugh was present. She described gang rapes she said occurred in which boys would line up to rape incapacitated girls.

"In approximately 1982, I became the victim of one of these 'gang' or 'train' rapes where Mark Judge and Brett Kavanaugh were present," she said, mentioning the name of a close friend of Kavanaugh. She did not identify her attackers and did not accuse Kavanaugh of taking part.

"During the incident, I was incapacitated without my consent and unable to fight off the boys raping me. I believe I was drugged using Quaaludes [a sedative] or something similar placed in what I was drinking," she said.

She also said she witnessed efforts by Kavanaugh and others "to cause girls to become inebriated and disoriented so they could then be 'gang raped' in a side room or a bedroom by a 'train' of numerous boys," adding she remembers boys including Kavanaugh getting in lines to take part in these rapes.

She did not identify the individuals directly involved in those assaults.

In an interview with Fox News on Monday, Kavanaugh was asked whether he ever participated in or was aware of any gang rape at a party he attended. "That's totally false and outrageous. I've never done any such thing, known about any such thing," Kavanaugh responded.

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Lying, not sexual misconduct, may bring down Brett Kavanaugh

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By many accounts, embattled Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh did not do himself any favors during his Monday night interview on Fox News. President Trump reportedly said Kavanaugh seemed "weak," and the nominee, who has been accused of committing sexual assault as a teenager, made claims — such as that he was a virgin for "many years after high school" and wasn't a heavy drinker — that acquaintances immediately took to Twitter to dispute.

Questions about Kavanaugh's honesty permeated his confirmation hearings — well before Christine Blasey Ford accused him of sexually abusing her during a drunken party in high school — and began with his first remarks after his nomination was announced.

Kavanaugh has a record of lying under oath:

1. At the White House event in which Trump formally nominated him, Kavanaugh said, "No president has ever consulted more widely, or talked with more people from more backgrounds, to seek input about a Supreme Court nomination." As a number of analysts pointed out, Kavanaugh's name came from a list generated by the ultra-conservative Federalist Society and circulated by Trump as a presidential candidate.

2. There is evidence that Kavanaugh lied under oath during confirmation hearings for his previous judicial positions, wrote former Sen. Russ Feingold in HuffPost. During Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing for his 2006 appointment to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in D.C., Feingold asked about Kavanaugh's involvement with Judge Charles Pickering, who was accused of breaching judicial ethics by collecting letters of support from other judges while up for his own Circuit Court post. Kavanaugh said he was not involved with Pickering. But recently-released emails showed that Kavanaugh was the primary person involved in handling Pickering's nomination.

"One Department of Justice official even asked for Kavanaugh's 'blessings and instructions' before calling the nominee. Others may have been involved, but Kavanaugh played a decisive leadership role in managing Pickering's nomination and then lied to me about it," wrote Feingold.

3. During his confirmation hearings for the Circuit Court and the Supreme Court, Kavanaugh — who, as assistant White House counsel, was in charge of preparing President George W. Bush's judicial candidates for their Senate hearings — denied receiving opposition research stolen from Democratic senators by a GOP Senate aide named Manuel Miranda.

But recently-released emails show that Kavanaugh received content from "numerous emails, draft letters and memos laying out the legal arguments Democrats were going to make regarding Bush's judicial nominees, including talking points written by a staffer to Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.)," wrote Feingold in HuffPost on Sept. 17.

4. When Sen. Kamala Harris asked Kavanaugh if he had ever discussed Robert Mueller's Russia investigation with an attorney at the firm of Kasowitz Benson Torres — which was founded by Marc Kasowitz, President Trump's personal lawyer — he stammered and awkwardly attempted to obfuscate, but didn't answer the question.

For now, the GOP is standing behind Kavanaugh ahead of Thursday's hearing in which he will respond to Christine Blasey Ford's accusations, which have now been bolstered by two more women. But a few Republican senators are waffling, and depending on what Kavanaugh says, some may look back at his record and end up agreeing with Feingold. MICHAEL MARTIN

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Who is the Arizona prosecutor chosen to question Brett Kavanaugh and his accuser?

Rachel Mitchell, who prosecuted sex crimes in Arizona, was chosen to question Kavanaugh and Christine Blasey Ford.

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Hoping to salvage the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh and cement a conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court for a generation, Republicans have chosen a woman who prosecuted sex crimes in Arizona to question President Donald Trump's nominee about sexual-assault allegations.

In a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Thursday, Rachel Mitchell, and not the Republican committee members, all of whom are male, will question Kavanaugh and Christine Blasey Ford, who has accused him of sexually assaulting her in high school.

Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley said they chose Mitchell for her experience and objectivity. She is on leave as chief of the special victims division in the Maricopa County Attorney's Office in Phoenix, Arizona.

As the special victims division head, she supervises prosecutors handling cases of sexual assault, child molestation, child prostitution and computer-related sexual offenses. She had served as a prosecutor since 1993.

Mitchell was drawn to prosecuting sex crimes after assisting a senior lawyer in a case against a youth choir director, she told a magazine affiliated with a Christian organization in 2012. "It struck me how innocent and vulnerable the victims of these cases really were," she said.

One of Mitchell's notable victories came in 2005, when she secured a guilty verdict against Catholic priest Paul LeBrun for sexually abusing boys in Arizona in the 1980s and 1990s. He was sentenced to 111 years in prison.

A statement from Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery, her boss, said Mitchell has a "caring heart" for victims and has lectured around the country on sexual assault investigations and prosecutions. REUTERS

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Trump accuses China of 2018 election meddling; Beijing rejects charge

President Donald Trump on Wednesday accused China of seeking to meddle in the Nov. 6 U.S. congressional elections, saying Beijing did not want his Republican Party to do well because of his pugnacious stance on trade.

"China has been attempting to interfere in our upcoming 2018 election, coming up in November. Against my administration," Trump told a U.N. Security Council meeting whose ostensible subject was nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Chairing the Council for the first time, Trump made no reference to suspected Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. election and provided no evidence for his allegation about China, which Beijing immediately rejected during the same meeting.

"We did not and will not interfere in any country's domestic affairs.

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We refuse to accept any unwarranted accusations against China," the Chinese government's top diplomat Wang Yi told the Council.

The United States and China are embroiled in a trade war, sparked by Trump's accusations that China has long sought to steal U.S. intellectual property, limit access to its own market and unfairly subsidize state-owned companies.

Later on Wednesday, Trump referred to a Chinese government-run media company's four-page supplement in the Sunday Des Moines Register promoting the mutual benefits of U.S.-China trade. The practice of foreign governments buying space in U.S. newspapers to promote trade is common and differs from a clandestine operation run by a national intelligence agency.

"China is actually placing propaganda ads in the Des Moines Register and other papers, made to look like news," Trump said in a Twitter post.

In a Des Moines Register article about the advertising supplement, Carol Hunter, executive editor of the newspaper, said the placement was not surprising.

"It's not surprising that China Daily sought to place advertising with the Des Moines Register, because the Register is Iowa's largest news organization and Iowa farmers are disproportionately affected by China's tariffs," Hunter said. REUTERS

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Bill Cosby's appeal likely to focus on parade of accusers at his second trial

Cosby was sentenced to three to 10 years on Tuesday.

Bill Cosby's appeal of his conviction for sexual assault is expected to focus on a Pennsylvania judge's decision to allow several accusers to testify against him, but his challenge faces significant hurdles, according to legal experts.

The disgraced comedian's first trial hinged largely on the credibility of a single woman, his one-time friend Andrea Constand, who said he drugged and sexually assaulted her in 2004, and ended in a hung jury.

At his second trial in April, Montgomery County Judge Steven O'Neill allowed the jury to hear five other women with strikingly similar stories of sexual abuse. Cosby was found guilty and on Tuesday was sentenced to up to 10 years in prison.

Cosby's lawyers face a difficult burden in convincing an appellate court to second-guess O'Neill's decision, experts told Reuters.

"I don't think that they have any significant likelihood of winning this appeal," said Michelle Dempsey, a law professor at Villanova University in Philadelphia. "The evidence was solid, and the standard in Pennsylvania is clear."

Other potential appeals grounds include the decade-plus gap between the crime and Cosby's arrest, claims of bias against the trial judge and an alleged promise by a former district attorney not to prosecute Cosby for the Constand incident.

Cosby, once known as "America's Dad" for his role as the beloved patriarch of the Huxtable family on the 1980s television comedy "The Cosby Show," has been accused by more than 50 women of sexual abuse dating back decades. Only Constand's allegations were recent enough to lead to criminal prosecution.

GETTY IMAGES

He was given a minimum of three years in prison on Tuesday and immediately taken in handcuffs to the county jail. His lawyers are expected to ask an appellate court to free him on bail while his appeal is pending.

A lawyer and a spokesman for Cosby did not respond to a request for comment on Wednesday.

Typically, testimony about "prior bad acts" is barred from trial, under the theory that jurors may end up convicting the defendant for misconduct unrelated to the crime in question. But many states, including Pennsylvania, permit such witnesses if they are called to show a specific pattern of behavior.

At Cosby's first trial, prosecutors sought to call more than a dozen other accusers, but O'Neill limited them to just one: Kelly Johnson, who said Cosby drugged and assaulted her in 1996. REUTERS

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the GRUMBLE

Pat King
Grumble Editor

READER WRITE-INS:

Every once in a while, we receive handwritten letters at Grumble HQ with some great topics from our readers. I must say, after looking through all of the reader submissions in our digital mailbox, it's kind of nice to get some, you know, "snail mail" from you guys! Feel free to send more mail or email us at **grumble@metro.us**.

A COUPLE O' GRUMBLES!

1 First, when in the supermarket, people who park their carts sideways and will not move even when you say "excuse me." They block the aisle and give you a dirty look. Then, when you are in line, they will not move their carts up so you can put your things on the counter. When it's your turn, you have to be real quick to try to get your items up for the cashier!

2 The neighbor who lets his dog jump at the fence barking and trying to bite family members who are trying to come into my house! — **Sent via mail by Alma Hoffman**, *Metro Philly reader*

ISTOCK

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The winning caption from Jeff Leonard, *Metro US reader*

TOMORROW'S PHOTO:

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metro & evvnt

INVITE THE WORLD TO YOUR EVENTS

List your event on metro.us/events

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Speak up if it will help you avoid being blamed for something you didn't do. Someone will use an emotional tactic to manipulate a situation that involved you.

Taurus Turn the way you feel about something or someone into an opportunity. Pay a visit or set up a meeting and voice your opinion and intentions.

Gemini It's good to communicate, but before you pass on information, make sure you have your facts right and your motives straight, or someone will be quick to correct you.

Cancer You can make a difference if you reach out and help someone. A youngster, loved one or friend going through a difficult time will be grateful and eager to return the favor.

Leo Sit tight and wait your turn. If you try to force others to do things your way, you'll face opposition. Use your intelligence and charm to get your way.

Virgo Get involved in events or hobbies that will broaden your sense of awareness and lead to interesting encounters with individuals who have something to offer you.

Libra Emotional issues will confuse you. Consider what you are missing out on and what you need to do to get back in the game. Focus on closure and forward motion.

Scorpio A change of heart may come as a surprise to you or someone close to you. Don't let anger set in when common sense and an innovative plan will lead to a positive outcome.

Sagittarius Look for new opportunities. Fill out applications or set up interviews with prospective job agencies. Find new ways to use your skills and promote what you have to offer.

Capricorn The changes you make at home will improve your disposition. Don't disregard someone making derogatory remarks that could hurt your reputation. Set the record straight and keep moving forward.

Aquarius Handle your assets carefully. Make an affordable investment that will help you gain greater financial stability. Don't make a snap decision based on an exaggerated sales pitch.

Pisces If you change the way you do things, new opportunities will come your way. An encounter with someone from your past will spark new ideas. Romance is on the rise. EUGENIA LAST

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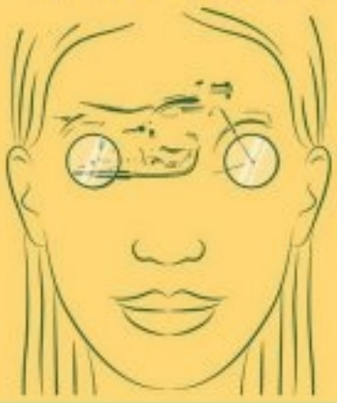

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The cast of Law and Order: SVU. ALL PHOTOS BARBARA NITKE/NBC

20 years of 'Law and Order: Special Victims Unit'

The stars of the long-running show reflect on how it brought the #MeToo conversation to the water-cooler.

PAT KING
patrick.king@metro.us

Dick Wolf might have superpowers. The creator of the cultural institution "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" has been pointing the spotlight on sexually based crimes well before the #MeToo movement gained the visibility that it has today.

This year will mark "Law and Order SVU" season 20, and the show has only gained more relevance a as the narrative around sexual assault.

Metro had the chance to speak with some of the stars of the show at the Tribeca TV Festival ahead of the show's premiere on Thursday September 29th.

Giving a voice to survivors

In a panel in front of hundreds of die-hard fans, no speaker received nearly the same reaction as Mariska Hargitay, who plays the uncompromising Det. Olivia Benson. When addressing her, creator Dick Wolf addressed her as the "grandmother of the #MeToo movement" for her continued work with her own charity, The Joyful Heart Foundation, as well as in reference to how her character has been a guardian angel for the survivors of sexual trauma on the show.

"I feel so grateful that we have brought something that has been traditionally swept under the carpet," said Hargitay.

"Something that has left survivors in shame and isolation — profound shame and profound isolation. I'm so grateful that this show has brought this to the water-cooler. Brought this conversation into the public arena in a way that has been profound, and I've done a lot of healing. Being able to tell these stories has been nothing short of a privilege and a gift."

The effortlessly cool Ice-T believes the show will do what it has always done when it comes to highlighting these issues as it continues.

"We are always dealing for women's rights and different people who are doing the wrong thing — using their power to get over and stuff like that," he says. "But I don't know if we can actually turn that up? I just think we need to keep doing what we're doing. … We're at the mercy of the script. You have to remember: I'm just an actor. So, people say, 'Well you should do this!' I'm like 'I can't say a word they don't put in my mouth!' So you gotta give that all to the writers. You've gotta give that all to the creators and the people behind the scenes writing these stories. We

just get to act them out."

Other than Mariska Hargitay, Ice-T is the show's elder statesmen having joined in the second season as his beloved character, Fin Tutuola, for what what was supposed to be a four-episode arc. He's been with the show since. So what keeps him inspired after all of these years?

"I don't know if I'm passionate or inspired. It's just, I'm an actor," say Ice. "I got on the show to do four episodes and it turned into 20 years. It's fun to come to work. Everybody on the show is nice. The working environment is cool. People love the show. So when I'm out in the streets people love me because — they love me because I'm on the show. That'll inspire you!

"I mean, think about it if you were on a show and everyone hates you. You'd be like 'Man, I don't know how long I wanna do this.' So the energy behind the show is so good. I'm an entertainer, so I'm just inspired to work. I'm just happy to have a job. How many actors are gonna get a ride for 20 years?

"You find out also that this show is a little bit more than just entertainment — it's therapy for a lot of people. It's another layer where people walk up to you and say, 'Thank you.' Not just, 'I like the show'; they say 'Thank you.' You realize you're not only entertaining them but you're helping them. So that's a good vibe, too."

A new face will join "Law and Order SVU" season 20: Philip Winchester will be playing district attorney Peter Stone. This character originally appeared on

Ice-T as Det. Tutuola.

Dick Wolf's Chicago law procedural, "Chicago Justice."

So what was it like joining such a well-oiled machine that has set such a high standard for the genre?

"Initially it was terrifying because there is so much history that you don't want to come in and be the blemish on it. But Mariska, Dick Wolf, Ice, Peter Kelly — they all welcomed me with open arms. And my first episode was with Sam Waterson. So with all of that history coming from the legal side, it made it as accessible to me as possible. The writers gave me amazing material to work with so I could lean on that when my fear was getting the best of me. It really helped."

But right away, Winchester knew that "Law and Order SVU" would not shy away from the painful and uncomfortable topics of the day. That's just not what "SVU" does.

"In this first episode," Winchester says, "we talk about the definition of masculinity and where that comes from, why it comes from bad places a lot of the times, and why it's coming from the places it's coming from in this episode.

"That's a really interesting place to start out. Because it's a different side of the #MeToo movement. When this show started, you couldn't talk about the things we are talking about. … But what it's doing — because of Mariska and because of the writing — is giving victims and survivors a platform and it's giving them courage. It's an incredible show to be a part of."

"Law and Order SVU" season 20 will premiere with a special two-hour episode Thursday, Sept. 27 on NBC at 9 p.m.

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THINGS TO DO

Local talent hits the stage at the Philly Music Fest. JOE DEL TUFO

A festival for the people

The Philly Music Fest honors the city by showcasing only local talent and refreshments.

MOLLY GIVEN
letters@metro.us

Philly Music Fest 2018 is the ultimate showcase of local talent and businesses in the City of Brotherly Love. Absolutely everything involved in this festival represents the city from the food to the entertainment.

The website states: "Our mission is to encourage the citizens of Philadelphia to SUPPORT YOUR SCENE.

"The Festival is both a testament and celebration of the exploding music scene in Philadelphia and a showcase of up and coming artists. In addition to music, the Festival will highlight the food, beer and arts of Philadelphia. Local chefs will provide edibles, while all beer taps will be pouring only local craft beer. Local distilleries will handle cocktails. Local artists will display visual arts. The experience is an immersion in Philadelphia culture."

Staying true to its word, this year's extravaganza will be one for the books, with an impressive lineup of Philly artists and bands including the Whips, Secret American, DJ Royale, Low Cut Connie, Great Time, Orion Sun, PALM, Philly State of Mind and plenty more.

You can catch all of your favorites at various locations starting Thursday, Sept. 27 and through Sunday, Sept. 30. The full lineup and schedule, including which band is playing where, is available online at **phlmusicfest.com**.

Being a nonprofit, the Philly Music Fest is all about supporting local musicians, music education programs and independent music venues.

Last year's festival was a huge success, raising $15,000 in donations to music education programs. The more tickets sold, the more money there is for music education organizations.

Along with great music, there is a lot more to enjoy at this colorful and entertaining festival, including refreshing beers to sip.

Philly Music Fest will feature only local craft breweries. Craft brews will be available on 20 taps at World Cafe Live's three bars and across all three venues participating this year.

If beer isn't your scene, there will be a lot more available to quench your thirst.

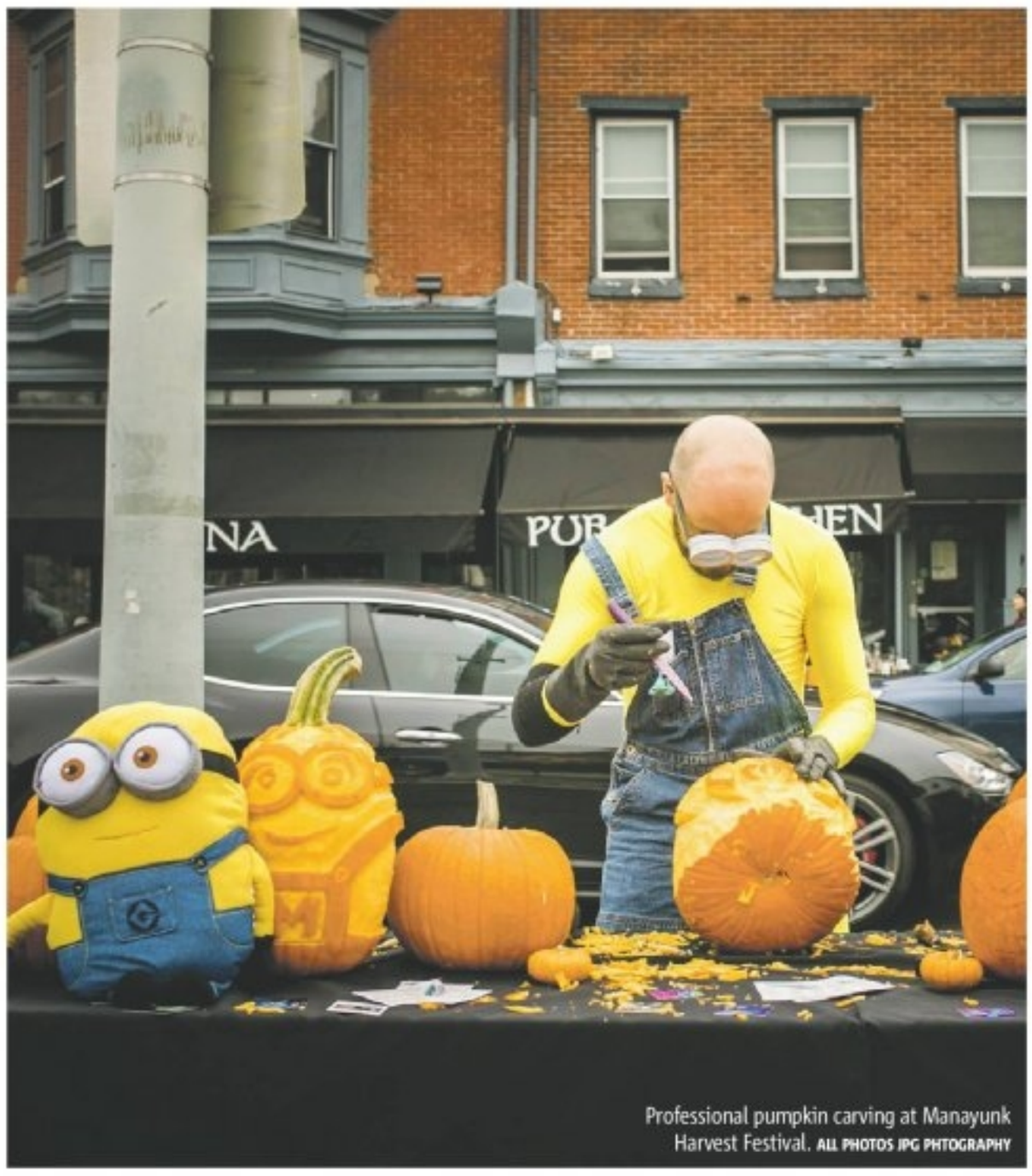
Several distilleries will be on site to provide specialty cocktails in honor of Philly's flourishing craft-cocktail scene. Expect plenty of gin, whiskey and vodka to savor while experiencing everything the festival has to offer.

Tickets range from $15-$50. Johnny Brenda's, World Cafe Live, and Milkboy are the locations included in the festival.

If you go

Sept. 27-30,
Various times and locations,
$15-$50, phlmusicfest.com

The four-day event will host numerous acts. FACEBOOK



Professional pumpkin carving at Manayunk Harvest Festival. ALL PHOTOS JPG PHTOGRAPHY

Fall fun for everyone

Manayunk Harvest Festival is full of family fun and exciting fall activities.

MOLLY GIVEN
Molly.Given@metro.us

Manayunk's Harvest Festival is the perfect opportunity to welcome the fall season with friends and family. Manayunk Harvest Fest is a celebratory day full of live music, seasonal activities, food vendors and all things fall in Pretzel Park and along Main Street.

Manayunk retailers will be featuring fall specials throughout the day, and the live music will move into Manayunk restaurants during dinner hours. You can enjoy delicious meals at some of Manayunk's local restaurants along Main Street or snack on some of the tasty food trucks and vendors at the festival, including Cupcake Carnivale, The Pizza Cruiser, Meat Wagon BBQ, Jammin Crepes, Stuff'd Buns and plenty more.

After you are full and satisfied, gear up to enjoy numerous fall activities throughout the Harvest Festival. Get your face painted, pose for a caricature drawing and watch professional pumpkin carving to truly get into the spirit of the season.

The fun does not stop there. Plenty of musical performances and shopping will be available throughout the festival.

All day long and into the night, enjoy the sounds of Hot Club of Philadelphia, Black Horse Motel, Andrew Jude, Those Guys Delco and plenty more talented acts.

"After much success of our inaugural event in 2017, we have decided to ramp up the live music aspect of the event," said Jane Lipton, executive director of the Manayunk Development Corporation. "Live music is such a huge part of what makes Manayunk thrive, and we're excited to be bringing a music event back to the community." The full lineup along with location and set time for each act is available online at manayunk.com.

Get ready to shop till you drop with participating shopping venues including LILA Fashion International (offering complimentary mulled wine and 10% off new fall attire), Philadelphia Runner (25% off all trail shoes), Junebug Flowers and Design (10% off potted plants) and much more.

Find out more information, including which roads will be closed due to the Festival and directions, at manayunk.com.

If you go:

Sept. 29, noon-6 p.m., Pretzel Park & Main Street areas of Manayunk, manayunk.com

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YOUR WEEKEND STARTS NOW

2018 Puerto Rican Day Parade

A celebration of Latino culture in the heart of the city's streets. Traditional Latino music, poetry, and dance make this vibrant festival parade a must-see event!
Sept. 30, 12:30 p.m.- 2:30 p.m., 2451 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, free, elconcilio.net

FEASTIVAL

If you are a foodie this is the event that you have been waiting. For one night only Philadelphia's top chefs pair up to create dishes inspired by flavors of the city. Every area of the city is represented, and the food creations will only be available here. FEASTIVAL has been hailed as "the cultural event of the year," "best party in Philadelphia," and "a party from a different world".
Sept. 27, 7 p.m.- 10 p.m. (VIP 6P.M.), FringeArts, 140 N. Columbus Blvd., $300-$450, phillyfeastival.com

South Philly Sausage Fest

Enjoy craft beer, live music, crafts, vendors, activities, treats and of course a boatload of sausage. Everything is sausage-themed making the event unique and different. Expect delicious Italian, kielbasa, chorizo, vegan sausages and more.
Sept. 29, 12 P.M.- 7 P.M., 1437 West Passyunk Ave., free admission, spsausagefest.weebly.com

Drink Philly's Fall Brunch Boat Party

Get a chance to cruise around for a three-hour tour filled with fun, booze, and views on the Spirit of Philadelphia. The tour includes a three-hour open bar, a brunch buffet, live DJ, and plenty of fun games and activities all included with your ticket.
Sept. 29, 2 p.m.- 5 p.m., Spirit of Philadelphia, 401 South Christopher Columbus Blvd., $57-$90, philly.thedrinknation.com

Boozin Through The World of Wizardry

You don't have to be a Potter head to love this event. Dress up in your best costume for this epic bar crawl. Each venue has a DJ, photographers, drink specials and a prize for the best costume. Plus tickets include your very own wand.
Sept. 29, 2 p.m.- 9 p.m., Rittenhouse Sq., $40, eventbrite.com

GETTY IMAGES

Christina Aguilera at The Hard Rock

Aguilera's long-awaited Liberation tour is finally here. The release of her eighth album has been met with insanely positive critic reviews and the songstress embarks on her first tour in over a decade.
Sept. 28, 8 p.m., Hard Rock Live at Etess Arena, 1000 Boardwalk, Atlantic City, $82+, ticketmaster.com

Flywheel event for the PSPCA

If you love animals, exercise or both here's your chance to make a difference for animals throughout the state by taking part in a Flywheel class to benefit the Pennsylvania SPCA! Each individual bike is sold to fundraise for the partnering cause. Shoes and water are included, plus a plant-based protein shake will be available after the workout. Bonus! Adoptable puppies will visit the studio after the ride for comfort and of course look for forever families.
Sept. 29, 4 p.m.- 6 p.m., Flywheel Center City, 1521 Locust St., $35-$55, pspca.org

Dinos After Dark

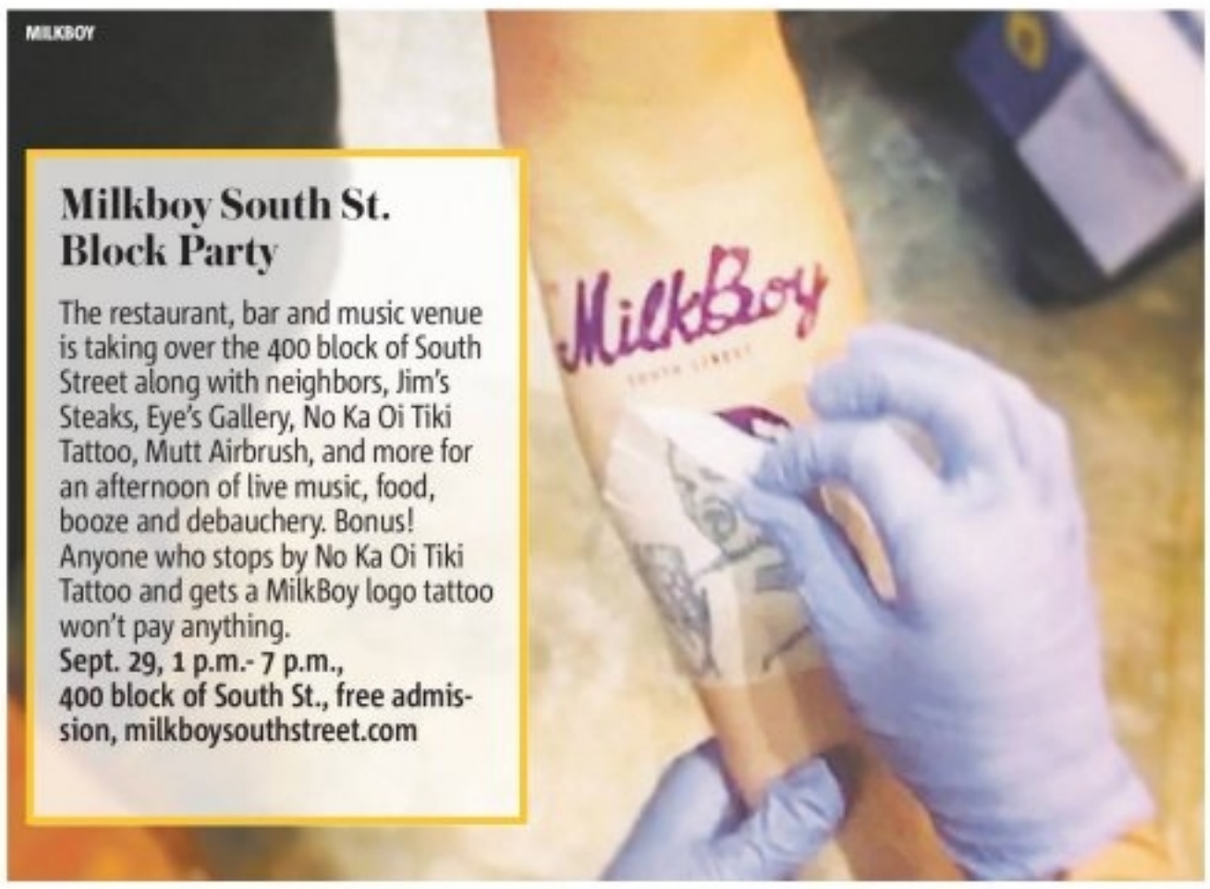
An event that is fun for the whole family! Dinos After Dark features a "meet the animals" exhibit, a scavenger hunt, a fossil prep lab, shows and kid-friendly activities plus a beer garden for adults to enjoy as well.
Sept 28, 4 p.m.-8 p.m., The Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, $2-$10, ansp.org

Brain Damage

(A tribute to Pink Floyd) Get your fix of Pink Floyd with cover band Brain Damage along with Grateful Dead cover band Steal Your Face. The sounds and entertaining performances will be a treat to any "Deadhead."
Sept. 29, 7 p.m.-10 p.m., Trocadero Theatre, 1003 Arch St., $18-$21, thetroc.com

MOLLY GIVEN

MILKBOY



Milkboy South St. Block Party

The restaurant, bar and music venue is taking over the 400 block of South Street along with neighbors, Jim's Steaks, Eye's Gallery, No Ka Oi Tiki Tattoo, Mutt Airbrush, and more for an afternoon of live music, food, booze and debauchery. Bonus! Anyone who stops by No Ka Oi Tiki Tattoo and gets a MilkBoy logo tattoo won't pay anything.
Sept. 29, 1 p.m.- 7 p.m., 400 block of South St., free admission, milkboysouthstreet.com

MANAYUNK HARVEST FEST
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 29TH 12PM - 6PM in manayunk

TRAVEL

4 Amazing concert cruises to help keep your summer alive

From the Kiss Kruise to Kesha's weeklong party at sea, here are the best concert cruises to check out as the weather gets colder.

PAT KING
patrick.king@metro.us

ISTOCK

Now that all of the summer festivals have wound down, it's time to prepare for the harsh unforgiving East Coast winter.

Yes, now you will have to settle for clutching your peacoat instead of waiting in line for the coatcheck while watching your favorite bands in stuffy, sweaty venues as the full force icy gales whip outside with no remorse. Does it really have to be this way? Here are four great concert cruises you can check out to ease you into your post-summer festival season hangover.

The Kiss Kruise: VIII, Decades at Sea!

When: Oct. 31 — Nov. 5

Millions of members of the Kiss army are hanging their heads low now that their faithful leaders are calling it a day with their final tour. Luckily, Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons and current members Tommy Thayer and Eric Singer will be suiting up for one more voyage on their last annual "Kiss Kruise." The voyage will set sail from Miami, Florida and make stops in Key West, Florida and Nassau, Bahamas, over this weeklong trip at sea with three performances by the band. Other artists throughout the trip will include ex-KISS members Ace Frehley and Bruce Kulick, Vintage Trouble, the Dead Daisies, Lucifer and many more. Who knows? This could be your only chance to see Gene Simmons floating in a hot tub sporting full makeup.

For more information on tickets and lodging, head over to thekisskruise.com.

GETTY IMAGES

The Soul Train Cruise

When: Jan.20-27

Fans of vintage soul — and working on their tans in the winter — will enjoy this cruise with some of the living legends of the genre. Headlined by Gladys Knight, George Clinton, the Ohio Players, Morris Day and the Time, and none other than Smokey Robinson, this cruise will leave from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and stop in Amber Cove, Dominican Republic; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and the island of Half Moon Cay. The cruise will include "Soul Train"-style dance-line competitions, artist Q&As, games shows, and many more activities.

For more information on tickets and lodging, head over to soultraincruise.com.

The Outlaw Country Cruise

When: Jan. 27-Feb.1

The Outlaw Country Cruise not only has one of the most stacked alt-country lineups of any festival around, but will also provide you with an amazing cruise to help you escape the harsh East coast winter. Leaving from Tampa, Florida, and stopping at both Great Kay and Nassau in the Bahamas — the festival will have some special performances from heavy-hitting bands like The Drive By Truckers, Lucinda Williams, Steve Earle and the Dukes and the Old 97's. Just to name a few. We're not kidding. Guests will also be able to enjoy an on-deck casino and special artist conversations with Sirius XM DJ's like the cow-punk legend Mojo Nixon ("Elvis Is Everywhere") as well as the creators of the Adult Swim show "Squidbillies."

For more information on tickets and lodging, head over to outlawcountrycruise.com.

Kesha's Weird & Wonderful Rainbow Ride

When: Feb. 17-21

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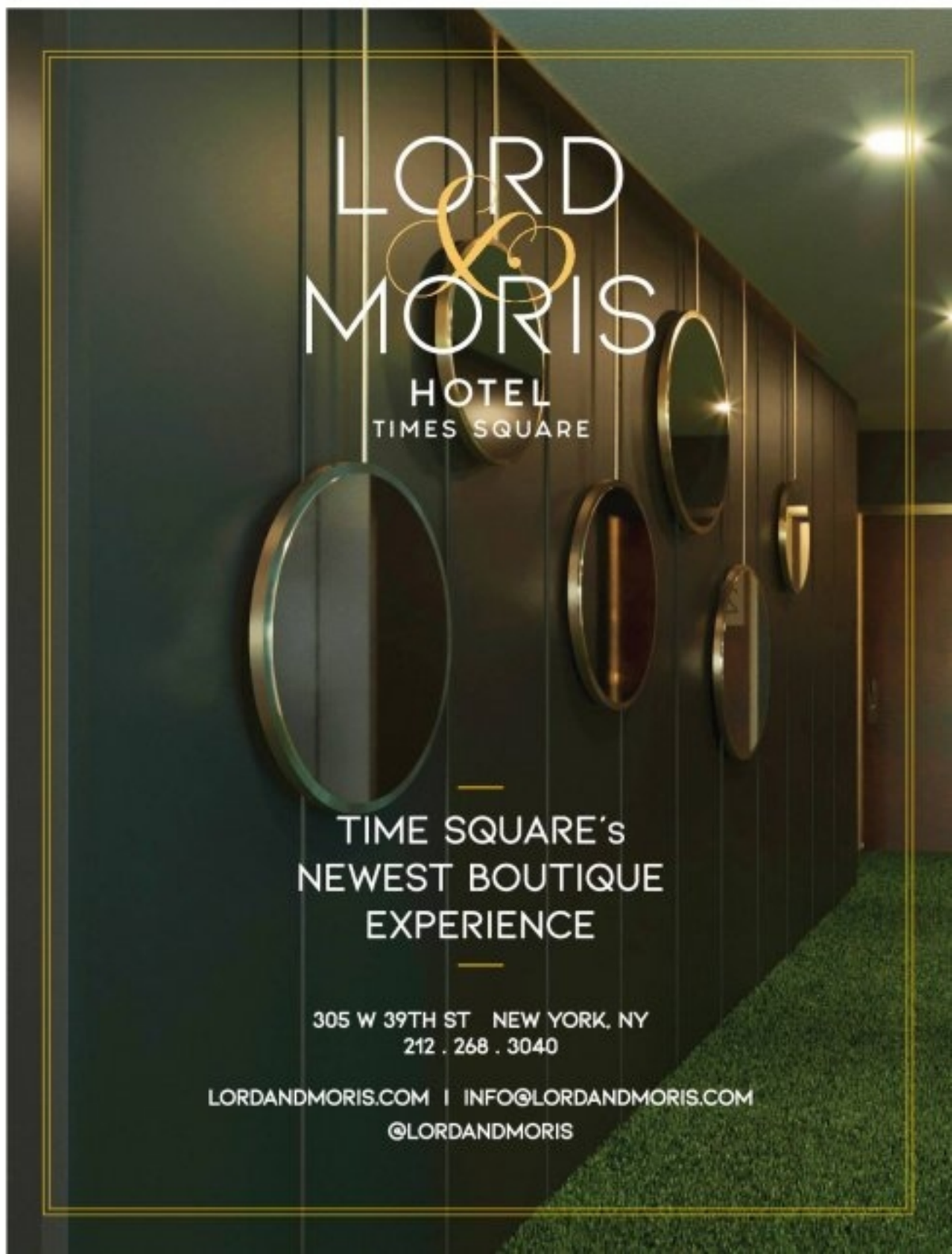
For more information on tickets and lodging, head over to keshasrainbowcruise.com.



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Eagles move up to No. 3

Ranking the top teams in the NFL ahead of Week 4.

LUKE MILLER
letters@metro.us

It wasn't pretty, but the Eagles are moving up in Metro's power rankings after a win over the Colts in Week 3. GETTY IMAGES

1. LA Rams (3-0) Def. LA Chargers. Last Week: 1
The Rams' defense has (rightfully) gotten much of the praise so far this season, but it was the offense that outgunned their crosstown rivals in the first all-LA game in decades. The Rams finished with 521 yards of offense and continued to live up to their offseason hype. They look like the least vulnerable team in the NFL right now, but face a big test against the Vikings on Thursday.

2. Chiefs (3-0) Def. 49ers. Last Week: 3
Patrick Mahomes' dream season continued with three touchdown passes. The quarterback has now thrown 13 scores and been intercepted zero times in 2018. Running back Kareem Hunt, who stole the rookie spotlight a season ago while Mahomes sat behind Alex Smith, got his first scores on the ground early against San Francisco. The Chiefs have a chance to get an early two-game lead in the division next week against the Broncos.

3. Eagles (2-1) Def. Colts. Last Week: 6
Carson Wentz's first game back showed a little rust, but zero cause for concern over the quarterback's ability or willingness to move on his healed knee. Sunday was vintage Wentz, escaping pressure and scrambling for first downs. If the Eagles want him to stay that way, they'd do well to protect him better: Despite his elusiveness, Wentz was sacked five times in his 2018 debut.

4. Saints (2-1) Def. Falcons. Last Week: 10
Is it too hyperbolic to call this Drew Brees' best game? There's a long list to go through, but the Saints' quarterback finished with 396 yards through the air and five touchdowns. Two of his scores, including the game-tying one, came on the ground. The Saints have one more game to get through without Mark Ingram, but Alvin Kamara has been up to carrying the full load in Ingram's absence: He had 31 touches for 190 yards Sunday.

5. Jaguars (2-1) Lost to Titans. Last Week: 2
The defending division champions still can't figure out a way to get past Tennessee. This time the Jaguars definitely missed Leonard Fournette, as T.J. Yeldon was held to 44 yards as the team's leading rusher. The Jacksonville offense desperately needs to get more consistent. A week after the best game of his career, Blake Bortles finished with 155 passing yards on 34 attempts.

6. Buccaneers (2-1) Lost to Steelers. Last Week: 4
The Steelers got to Ryan Fitzpatrick in the first half and it looked like the end of the Fitzmagic era before a late rally gave him his third 400-yard passing game in as many outings. The Bucs are still relying almost exclusively on their passing attack on offense, though in this game a 30-10 halftime deficit may have necessitated as much. Now the story line becomes whether Fitzpatrick will continue in his role as the starter as Jameis Winston returns from his suspension.

7. Panthers (2-1) Def. Bengals. Last Week: 11
The Panthers went back to their calling card Sunday against the Bengals. Christian McCaffrey had a career-high 184 of their 230 rushing yards and the defense intercepted Andy Dalton four times. That's the same number of touchdowns Cam Newton accounted for for the Panthers. They'll be among the first of the teams to enjoy a bye week in Week 4.

8. Dolphins (3-0) Def. ORaiders. Last Week: 16
Albert Wilson threw a 52-yard touchdown pass to open the fourth quarter, and then followed it up by catching a 74-yard score from Ryan Tannehill. Tannehill's near-perfect quarterback rating on the day (155.3) was nevertheless beaten by his receiver's perfect 158.3. The Dolphins are rolling now, and they face the reeling Patriots next. If there was ever a time to break a streak of nine straight losses in New England, this is it.

9. Steelers (1-1-1) Def. Bucs. Last Week: 12
Vance McDonald was the latest recipient of the passing attack that has seen Ben Roethlisberger throw for 1140 yards in the first three games. After a Week 1 outing with five turnovers and a Week 2 game where the defense allowed six passing touchdowns, the Steelers finally put both sides of the ball together Monday night... for at least a half. They were outscored in the second half 17-0 despite hanging on for the win.

10. Patriots (1-2) Lost to Lions. Last Week: 7
It was one thing to watch the Jaguars' defense shut down an attrition-weary Patriots team in Jacksonville. It was quite another to watch New England only manage to break the 200-yard mark in the closing minutes Sunday night against the team that allowed Sam Darnold's Jets 47 points two weeks ago. After terrorizing the NFL with the deep ball a season ago, the Patriots' longest play Sunday was 19 yards.

11. Falcons (1-2) Lost to Saints. Last Week: 8
Calvin Ridley is ignoring any learning curve for rookie wide receivers: He has 210 yards and four touchdowns in his first three games, and 146 yards and three of those scores came Sunday against the Saints. The Falcons' under-siege defense needs to figure things out before they face the Bengals this week.

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Could Alshon Jeffery play Sun. against Titans?

Eagles WR Alshon Jeffery (17) runs a route in the second half during the game between the Arizona Cardinals and Philadelphia Eagles on Oct. 8, 2017, at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia, Pa. PHOTO BY KYLE ROSS/ICON SPORTSWIRE VIA GETTY

For the second straight week, the Eagles have received great news on the injury front regarding one of their top offensive playmakers.

Last week, Eagles head coach Doug Pederson announced that third-year quarterback Carson Wentz was cleared for contact and would be the starter against the Indianapolis Colts.

And then on Wednesday, Pederson announced No. 1 wide receiver Alshon Jeffery has been cleared for contact, but that his status for Sunday's game will be determined later in the week.

Nevertheless, this is great news to hear as Philly's wide receiver unit desperately missed the presence of Jeffery through the first three weeks of the season.

Pederson was asked about having Jeffery back in the fold and what he brings to the offense.

"It definitely gives us, offensively, a shot in the arm, and he can become a big impact, quite honestly, with the offense and the way [Eagles offensive coordinator] Mike Groh and myself, the formations and moving our guys around, moving him inside, moving him outside," he explained.

"There's going to be a progression with him, and I don't think it will be instantaneous, but at the same time the more comfortable he gets, the better he becomes. He becomes a target defensively as you saw in some of the games last year where he was doubled a lot, especially in the red zone and we know that is going to happen. He or [TE Zach] Ertz are going to be sort of taken away if defenses can, but yeah he makes a huge difference for us."

Without having the likes of Jeffery, both quarterbacks Nick Foles and Wentz have had to lean on tight ends Zach Ertz, Dallas Goedert and Josh Perkins, and wide receiver Nelson Agholor.

In last Sunday's game, the Eagles tight ends were targeted 21 times for 13 receptions and a touchdown. In comparison to the wide receivers, Agholor and Jordan Matthews were only targeted seven times for six receptions. Those numbers should go up a bit with Jeffery returning to the lineup.

Over the last few weeks, it was speculated that Jeffery could return sometime during the early part of the regular season. ESPN's Adam Schefter and Chris Mortensen reported late last month that Jeffery was expected to miss the first two weeks of the season and there was optimism that he could be back by Week 3.

Jeffery had torn rotator cuff surgery after the Eagles defeated the New England Patriots in Super Bowl LII back in February. The veteran wide receiver suffered the injury back in training camp last summer and played with it throughout last season.

Despite having a banged-up shoulder, it did not slow down Jeffery from having a productive 2017 campaign. Last season, he had 57 receptions (120 targets) for 789 yards and nine touchdowns.

The 28-year-old Jeffery also came up huge in the postseason as he had 85 receiving yards and two touchdowns in the NFC championship game and 73 receiving yards and a score in the Super Bowl.

With that being known, the Eagles are definitely happy to have Jeffery back because it should open up things for other players on the field and give Wentz a viable option to stretch the field.

Philly has not been able to create big plays through the air to begin the season, but that could change if Jeffery plays against Tennessee.

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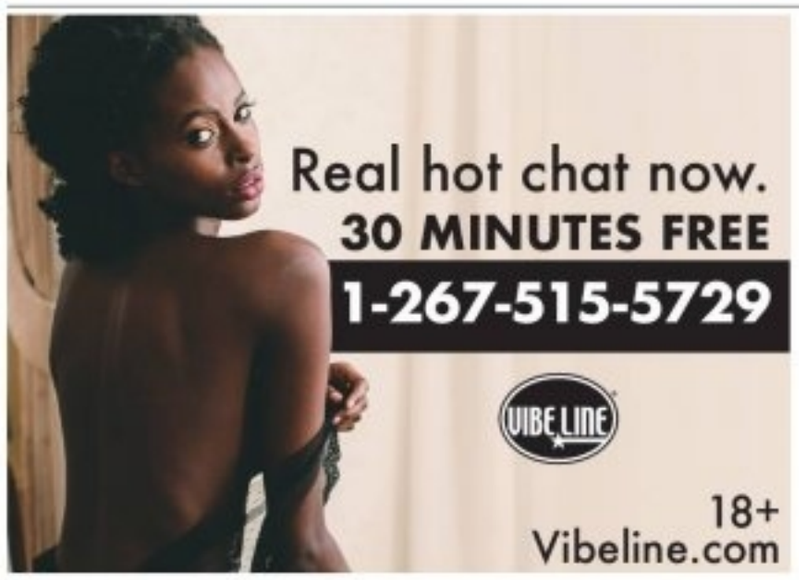

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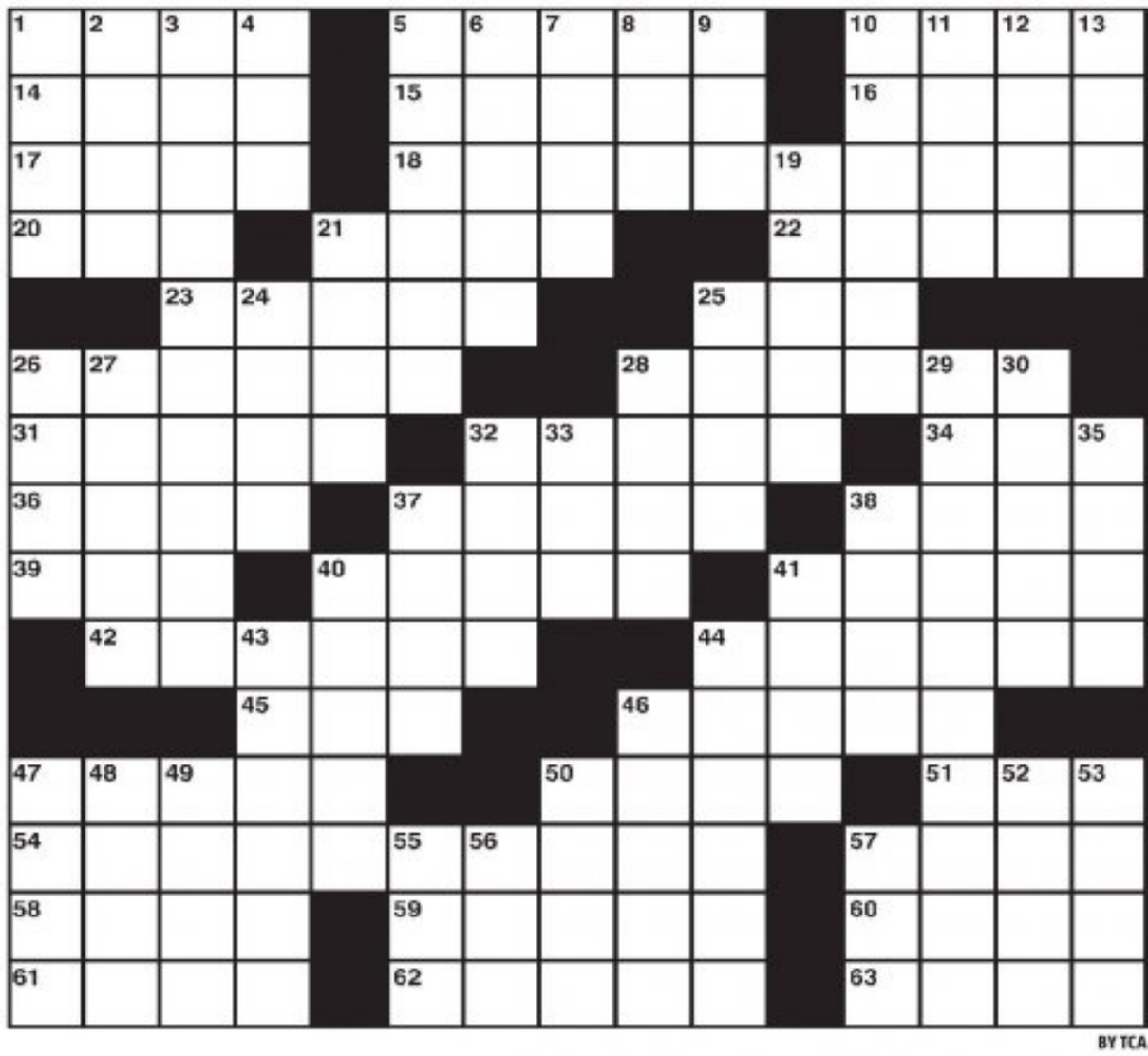

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44 Actress Tyson
46 Web surfer's stops
47 Egg on
48 500 sheets of paper
49 Soothing ointment
50 Bugle song
52 Picnic spoilers
53 Has to
55 Twelfth-graders: abbr.
56 Actress Leoni
57 Gent

BY TCA

metro.us/wordsearch

W	W	A	B	E	A	R	A	R	F
I	R	C	Y	P	T	V	X	A	E
V	R	E	P	P	E	P	S	C	G
N	I	R	O	N	M	A	N	S	W
E	E	L	G	I	N	O	M	O	Y
V	Y	E	L	P	I	R	R	M	N
E	R	S	S	E	R	T	C	A	E
S	R	E	V	O	L	O	W	T	T
M	G	W	E	A	C	H	S	U	H
G	O	O	P	O	T	T	S	X	P

Actress
Avengers
Emma
Glee
Goop
Gwyneth
Hush
Iron Man
Mr. Ripley
Oscar
Paltrow
Pepper
Potts
Seven
Two Lovers

metro.us/wander

Category: Film

E	M	Y	N
B	U	I	E
Y	O	G	H
T	R	O	B
N	O	W	

Trace a path, using every letter once, to find the hidden phrase. Your path can turn in any direction, but not diagonally.

metro.us/sudoku

	7		5	6	2			
		3	4					2
1	5	2		9				
	3	5	2				8	7
			6		3			
4	1				7	2	3	
				4		7	2	8
2					9	1		
			7	2	6		4	

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C	R	I	B			S	O	A	K		A	D	A	M
L	U	N	A	R		T	W	I	N		T	A	X	I
I	N	T	H	E		E	N	L	I	G	H	T	E	N
P	S	I		T	I	P			C	R	E	A	S	E
		M	O	A	N	S			K	E	N			
T	R	I	V	I	A			S	E	A	S	O	N	
W	I	D	E	N		C	H	A	R	T		V	E	T
A	S	A	N		P	L	U	G	S		T	E	A	R
S	E	T		S	H	A	M	E		B	E	R	R	A
	R	E	S	T	E	D			C	L	A	S	S	Y
			P	E	A			R	O	A	S	T		
I	T	G	O	E	S			I	T	S		A	H	A
C	H	A	R	L	A	T	A	N		T	A	T	E	R
E	A	S	T		N	O	D	S		S	T	E	A	M
D	I	P	S		T	A	M	E			E	S	P	Y

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